

Under the Rainbow: Oral Histories of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual,  
Transgender, Intersex and Queer People in Kansas

Rich Crank  
Oral History

Interviewed by  
Tami Albin

December 7, 2008

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**Rich Crank:** Narrator  
**Tami Albin:** Interviewer

**TAMI ALBIN:** Okay. So today is December 7, 2008, and I'm here with Rich Crank. And I'm going to start off this interview the way that I start off all my other interviews which is, Tell me where you were born and when.

**RICHARD CRANK:** I was born in 1953 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. I was—my parents—my dad was in the military, and I'll talk about that later, but he met my mom. They got married after I don't know how long. And then I had—an older brother was born, eighteen months later I was born, and six months after that we left the island. Dad was transferred to Fort Dix, New Jersey which I don't remember at all. From there we went to Fort Myer, Virginia. And I think I'm probably one of the few people alive who has pet turtles buried in Arlington National Cemetery because we were at Fort Myer, Virginia about—maybe two hundred yards from the Pentagon while the area—I had some pet turtles that died and we buried them in my yard and that was like turned into part of the cemetery.

So—(laughter) From Fort Myer, Virginia in I guess 1960 my father was transferred to France. And we were not allowed to go because it was still both postwar and—and I guess primarily because of the Cold War Eisenhower had not allowed military dependence to be with their sponsors. So once Kennedy was elected I remember we were in Arlington, Virginia in a small house. And we got word that we could go join my dad, so my mom took my brother and me and four other kids from the age of probably, I think, nine or ten to infant from Washington, D.C. to France. We lived there for three years, which was for me the second half of elementary school, third grade to sixth grade. And then we left France and came to Fort Riley, Kansas where I spent junior high and high school years. We moved to Junction City from Fort Riley at one point when my dad was sent to Korea for a year. And so I went to Junction City High School,

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which wasn't particularly pleasant knowing that I was gay and not being out about it and other people knowing that I probably was even though I wasn't saying anything and was very naive and didn't know a lot.

I guess one of the things I should say about my childhood is that I was raised Catholic. And I always thought I was going to be a priest for many years up until I decided I really didn't believe God exists. (laughs) That kind of put the priesthood out. (laughs) But even in my college years I was a devout Catholic until I reached the point when I really just asked myself, Do I believe in God or not? Now one of the things that I always wonder about is since I thought I was going to be a priest I knew that girls were out, but I've always wondered if since nobody ever said boys are also out (laughs) if that was somehow part of the trigger. I don't know. It doesn't matter, but it was kind of something that I've pondered over throughout my adulthood. But, like I said it doesn't really matter. I am gay.

One of the reasons I came to KU in 1971 when I graduated from high school was because for one thing I considered it a better school than K-State. My mom wanted me to go to K-State because it would be so much cheaper and I could live at home. (laughs) But I was able to get away from home and come to a school that I knew there—I knew there had to be gay people (laughs) even though I didn't know any. So I came to KU in the fall of '71 and at that time there was a group called the Gay Liberation Front of Lawrence that was meeting, not on campus. It was meeting at the ECM Building, the Ecumenical Christian Ministries Building, which I think then was called the United Ministries in Higher Education. And so I had sort of found out that there was this group. And I went to a meeting and I went to a second and a third meeting. It was kind of—it was really informal. They didn't have Robert's Rules of Order or anything. It was kind of a bunch of people talking about being gay and meeting each other. And for the first, I think, meeting or two women were there, but at—whichever—at a subsequent meeting, I remember very clearly that at one point a woman stood up and said, We're tired of all your patriarchal approaches to these meetings. The women are leaving. See ya. (laughs) We're going to have our own group. And I just thought, How cool (laughs) to just see these women just get up and walk out because the guys were being guys even though they were gay. So the women had just gotten tired of it and said, No, we're not standing for this. We're not going to sit around and hear a bunch of guy talk. So they just kind of disappeared. And since I wasn't a woman I had no idea what had

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happened. But I pretty much stopped going to the GLF meetings. Years—over the years it did get recognized, but by then it was calling itself something different. It became a student organization and I can't remember what the different names were. Like one of the early ones was Gay and Lesbian Services of Kansas, but I think there might have been some other names before that.

Anyway so when I was in high school I really—I had never had—I didn't go on dates. I didn't—there was no such thing for me. And so I kind of didn't know how that stuff works. I never—that just—it was totally something that I didn't—I had no concept of. So as a freshman and sophomore at KU I kind of—I started screwing around a lot and partying and just—and being out late at night and that went on for too many years, I suppose. I learned about the bars in Kansas City and started going to them once I was twenty-one. And in the meantime the gay dances at the Union were becoming famous. There were people coming from halfway across the country to go to the dances. There would be—the whole ballroom floor would be just filled with people for the Halloween dance and especially because of just amazing costumes. So that I kind of—what I should have learned to do in high school, going out with people and going on dates and maybe having sex too, depending—I had never—It was totally beyond me until I came to KU, and that's kind of what got me into big trouble was that I was learning the stuff too late that I should have learned before I came to college. And so I ended up dropping out and sort of concentrating more on both working full time and my social life. So I—Gosh, where do I go from here? (laughs)

**ALBIN:** Well, when did you first realize that you were gay? You had mentioned that you knew in high school.

**CRANK:** Well, okay. In junior high I had a crush on a guy. And we got to be friends. And then he left and then I met another guy that I eventually decided I was going to live with. He was a—He came to Junction City, I think, our junior year. I know we graduated together, although he didn't go to the graduation ceremony. He was a black guy named Ken. And about a year into our friendship I realized I was in love with him and told him I wasn't sure what that meant, but that was how I felt. And he got all freaked out and wanted nothing to do with me. And so he went off to Stanford and I came to KU. (bell ringing) And a year later I got a—or maybe two years later I got a

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letter from him, apologizing for how he had behaved. And it turned out that he—he told me he had felt so bad that he actually had sex with a guy to see if he might enjoy it (laughs) but he didn't. And so of course my internal response was, Well but that's because it wasn't me. (laughter) If it had been with me (laughs) you would have loved it. But anyway—but no, he's very straight and happily married and he has a daughter. They've been married for many years. He's a real—he's still a good friend. We get in touch whenever possible, when he comes to town. So—so that was the high school stuff. I mean, that's how I knew that I was gay even though I didn't tell my parents.

**ALBIN:** Right. And did they have—did they suspect anything even though you didn't tell them?

**CRANK:** Well, I thought they must have suspected by the time I did tell them in my—when I was in my, I think thirties. But that's a story—let me—I—okay, so after all this stuff I met a guy named Craig and we—he—we lived in separate apartments. I had my—I had basically a room shared in a house that I—in a house and he had, I think, a small tiny apartment on Mass Street. And he decided he couldn't stand Kansas anymore and he needed to get away. And his—he was a big baseball fan so his choices were either Florida or Arizona. And he decided to move to Tucson. So he moved there, I think, in October or so of whatever year it was. And I'm realizing this is going to be rambling because I'm going to have to go back to some other people that I've known in the past, but we'll talk about that, because it was a relationship that kind of got interesting. I decided I would move to Arizona with him. And so that—either—I think it was maybe January that I moved to Arizona, to Tucson. And we were there for nine months. And about six months into the nine months he got really, really sick. And so his parents flew him back to Kansas and I got stuck in Tucson. Although by then I had a library job at the University of Arizona, it didn't pay very well at all and I couldn't make it on my own. So—and then he got a job offer in his—near his hometown. And so I came back and we moved in together in Chanute. But then he sort of had a mental breakdown and we ended up—we sort of cut off Chanute.

We moved to Lawrence, actually to Eudora, for a year and then moved into—moved back to Lawrence. And he walked out on me at one point. And I really wish that I had said, Too bad, but he called and wanted back and so I let him come back. And then a

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year later I just realized it was not working and so I just said, Look, if you want to move, go. And he did and I was a basket case. I fell apart completely and tried to figure out how to get him back which was stupid I now know. It was just really stupid, but that's where I was at the time. So I—so that relationship fell apart and although I've seen some people in the meantime, I'm quite happily single, very happily single. And I would rather be single than in any kind of a relationship where somebody is a total jerk, and he was a total jerk in many, many, many ways, so I am very glad to be where I am now.

Now before I met him I met an English professor who was a very, very dear man and he and I had a relationship. And I moved into his house and stayed with him for, I think a year or two. It became platonic because I tried to tell myself that I was really not gay. I went through that phase two or three, four years after realizing I was gay. And then I suddenly said, Yeah I want to get married and have kids. Ahh—(laughs) But I—but even—I mean, he was such a good man. For one thing, this guy taught me how to drive a standard car in his car. He said, Look you are going to have to learn how to drive this car. So we went out when students weren't around to parking lots up on Daisy Hill and he taught me how to drive a stick shift. I had never done that before in my life. He was a very, very wonderful guy in every way. He died, I think, five years ago or six years ago. And I still miss him, his friendship, but that happens. So, that's Ed and that's Craig. One of the things that happened that was kind of exciting to me was that because of my acquaintance with Ed and friendship and relationship and all that stuff, I started reading poets and poetry and stuff like that. He was a Whitman scholar. He—I became fond of W. H. Auden. And Ed, sort of very gleefully, told me about a—not a manuscript but a typescript, a typed version of a poem that was believed to be one of Auden's, although Auden denied it. It was called "The Platonic Blow". And they had a copy in Spencer library. And I just went in one day and I said, I'm looking for a two-page typed poem that is called "The Platonic Blow". (laughs) And they brought it out for me. (laughs) So yeah that—Okay, Ed was one important person in my life who was gay and sort of a role model for being an older gay, just great guy, great guy. I also met some other gay poets over the years because of him. I did get to meet—even though Stephen Spender wasn't—isn't gay, but he was a close friend of Auden's so I got to meet him at one point and talk to him while I was at Ed's house, and that was very cool. And let's see, other people that have been—eh, geez. (laughs)

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**ALBIN:** How did you end of up working like in a library? Is—

**CRANK:** Oh, well, okay I started out as a student assistant. And then when I dropped out of school—well, actually before I dropped out, before I really completely dropped out, I had been really good. I was the—I was—did the stacks and the desk and—this would have been in the seventies, the early seventies—'72-'73, '73-'74. And I actually got a three-quarter time job as—I think—I think I was—I guess I was the stack supervisor. And when that happened I really—that's when I really quit school completely. And so I've been in libraries ever since, mostly at KU but with—at one about six months that I actually worked at the University of Arizona and then came back to Kansas. So it was—it just seemed to fit in a lot of ways. So I've liked library work. And one of the things that I've always known is that I could be open. I'm not necessarily very open, but one of the things—the KU libraries used to have—occasionally would put out a Who's-Who in the libraries. And people could say whatever they wanted about themselves. And I finally decided that I was going to come out in that way. (laughs) So they put it in, announced they were doing a new edition and so I said, Here's my favorite authors, Kafka and Camus and Emily Dickinson. My favorite movies are blah, blah, blah and *Woman Under the Influence* and other movies and then something else about myself. And then I said, Oh and by the way for those to whom it matters, I'm gay. And it was the very first time anybody had come out openly as a library staff member.

**ALBIN:** And what was the reaction, or was there a reaction?

**CRANK:** Well, nothing got—I never heard a reaction. Well, there was one guy that said, Oh I thought that was really cool what you said. But other than that, I never heard to my face a negative response. Although I was told by other people that—or at least one other person, that there were people that went, Eww. (laughs) But they didn't express it to me, so it doesn't really matter.

**ALBIN:** So you said that you came out to your parents when you were in your thirties.

**CRANK:** Maybe even—okay, this was—I actually came out to them while I was in Arizona living with Craig. And I had—I kind of messed things up because I had said, Hey I'll come out and see you if you can buy me the plane ticket (laughs) because I



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couldn't afford it. I should have just not even done it, but I—so I went out for a three-day weekend because there was a holiday of some kind. And I kept wanting to tell them and I didn't and I didn't and I didn't. And then on the last day—I think it was maybe midmorning of the last day and I was going to be leaving in the late afternoon—I said, I need to talk to you about—you and dad about something, to my mother. And she thought it was financial stuff.

**ALBIN:** Right. And so they were living where at the time?

**CRANK:** Oh, they were in California.

**ALBIN:** Okay.

**CRANK:** Sorry. Sorry, I forgot to explain that. They were living in a town about an hour north of San Francisco. And so I—so I flew out and spent the weekend with them. And then the last day I was there I said, Well we need to talk. Well I thought things were going to be okay because my mom had said to me— I still had two sisters that were in high school, or maybe—and one in junior high or something. I can't remember who was what age, but there were siblings—there were sisters living at home and my mom had told—she told me that she had sat each of them down and said, Look, you shouldn't be having sex, but if you are I want you to—I want you—I want you to be on the pill. (laughs)

**ALBIN:** Right.

**CRANK:** So, I thought, Okay mom is really cool about this. So—and surely she had suspected. And so I went into their bedroom and I sat down and I said, I'm gay. I always have been. I just want you to know that. And mom started crying and dad got up and walked out, and I knew this was a problem. (laughs) So my mom said, Well, we love you and you're our son, but don't ever bring anyone like that here. Well, of course that to me was, We really would rather that you not be around. She said, You have a younger brother—as if I was going to bring somebody home to seduce him or something. There just—she was just—so I went back to Tucson and spent another period of time with Craig until he got sick and all that stuff happened.

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And so I did call my mom and say, I'm moving back to Kansas. And she just didn't understand. She (unintelligible), I don't understand. You moved down there, blah, blah, blah. And I said, Well I moved here to be with Craig and I'm moving back to be with Craig. And she said, I can't talk to you about this, and she hung up on me. That was the first time that had ever happened. And so we didn't talk for about a year and I decided I was going to wait until she indicated it was okay. And so I'm not really sure how it happened, but we talk now, we talk a lot. And she is much more radical about a lot of things. She's still not happy about me being gay and I think she's happy that I'm single. If I'm going to be gay she'd rather that I be single than be involved with somebody. Well, I'm happy single, I'm happy gay. If I found the right person—but right now my soul mate is a four-legged canine companion that you know named Kafka, (laughs) and that's—that has been the one relationship that has been—it's just—it's the perfect relationship for me at this point in my life so—I—and I've told Kafka I will never let anyone interfere with his and my relationship. So that's just kind of—that's the way it is.

**ALBIN:** And so with your father walking out, did you speak to him after that or—

**CRANK:** We have—he and I have never talked about it since then. And actually neither have—my mom and I haven't really talked about it, although a couple of years later dad had to do something in Leavenworth. He came out from California. And mom came along. And mom and my sister, my next sister after me, came over for lunch and mom met Craig. And so that was a huge step for them.

**ALBIN:** So you have five siblings, is that right?

**CRANK:** Well, actually seven because there were two that were born in France, I forgot about them.

**ALBIN:** Okay. That's a big family.

**CRANK:** Yeah. (laughter) And interestingly enough, I'm the only one that's gay.

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**ALBIN:** And how did they all react to that?

**CRANK:** All of them that I ever told were very supportive. Well, my older brother, when I told him I was going to tell mom and dad he said, Hold off, let me think about this and talk to you some more. Well he never got back to me. So I went ahead and told them. Oh, my younger brother—my youngest brother, because there's—the way my family worked out it's two boys, then a girl, then a boy, then a girl, then a boy and then two girls. So we're very evenly matched. (laughs) The brother that's after me just said, Doesn't matter at all. The next brother after me, the way I told him I had—I was in California and we were talking and he said, By the way, do you like professional wrestling? (laughter) And this was back in the—this was in the eighties when there was a professional wrestling thing called Georgia Championship Wrestling on WTBS that I had started watching and there was a—there was one guy—it was a family of wrestlers. And I was—I had a crush on one of the wrestlers. And so I said, Well, I only watch when Kevin Von Erich plays—(laughs) or wrestles on Georgia Championship Wrestling because I'm gay and I think he's really cute. (laughter) That was—of all the ways to come out to a brother, but it worked. He said, Oh okay. (laughs)

**ALBIN:** That's really funny.

**CRANK:** But pretty much the sisters—there are several sisters that I've never told, but I'm sure that they know now so—

**ALBIN:** Right. And are they are scattered all over the U.S. or—

**CRANK:** There's a brother in the Washington, D.C. area, a sister in the Washington, D.C. area, a sister that's in Atchison, Kansas, now a sister that's in Denver. She stayed in California when everybody else moved north to Washington. My older brother has been in Washington for a number of years, he's an airline pilot. And my parents moved from California to Washington State, and they're there along with a sister and a brother.

**ALBIN:** So were you—when you were involved in stuff at KU with the Gay Liberation Front, were you political in any way?

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**CRANK:** Well, I was actually fairly conservative. And I remember saying, Hey look, you guys are talking like you're all Marxist and I'm not a Marxist. My dad's in the military. I'd be in trouble if I was a Marxist. And I don't like—just don't put down the establishment the way they were putting it down, so—and then I kind of stopped going and did more of a social kind of thing rather than political.

**ALBIN:** So after you dropped out of school did you become politicized in any way?

**CRANK:** Gosh, that's a good question. I've always thought that it was important that gays and lesbians have equal rights. I've always thought that and I've never thought they would—it would happen in my lifetime. But the—just sort of doing little chinks like coming out to family members, I thought, was making progress. I do think that's true. When my parents—after I came out to my parents was when they had, I think, the first of the initiatives that wanted to say that gays could not be teachers. And my dad just said, That's stupid. (laughs) And so to me that was kind of irrelevant because I was in Kansas. But it was really cool that he would acknowledge that, Yeah that was a stupid initiative to have even been presenting. But I—and I've seen—I've kind of been, at times, political and other times not so, mainly trying to focus on whatever changes I can do in my own daily life, which is why I decided it was important.

No, I'm not the health commissioner for the City of New York coming out. I'm just a guy working at a library. I think I got more political when the AIDS crisis hit. And I do remember very clearly— Craig and I had a friend—or, he was more Craig's friend than mine. But there was a guy who was a student in the pharmacy school here. And I remember I was driving down Mississippi Street from campus and he was in the car as well as Craig. And he said, Have you heard about the gay cancer? And I said, What? This guy—this is a pharmacy student. He says, Yeah, there's a cancer that's only hitting gay people. I thought, I don't know exactly what causes cancer, but surely it can't tell gay people from straight people. It just knows people (laughs) or dogs or whatever, just—so I thought that was totally nuts. And then I found out, Well yeah there was this thing that was suddenly appearing among young, gay men, but of course it was in fact—these were conditions. The cancer and the pneumonia were both conditions that actually elderly men of Mediterranean extraction and Jewish people had gotten in the U.S. for years. And so I realize, No it's not a gay cancer, it's just a cancer that gays

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have suddenly started getting. So I started kind of paying attention to what was going on but still it was in San Francisco and New York and it seemed very remote from here. Then over the years people in Lawrence starting getting sick.

**ALBIN:** And so did you take part in any of the ACT UP protests that happened?

**CRANK:** No, no. I mean there was no ACT UP organization in Lawrence at the time, but I kind of started telling people to be careful. (laughs) And once we knew that, Yes unprotected sex was part of the problem that became an issue. Now one of the things that I started doing, after—I did do two library displays for World AIDS day two different years, and for both of them—this is at Watson Library and in Anschutz Library. And what I did was when it was in the two different libraries the Anschutz one had sort of scientific stuff more than anything else, but in both of the library exhibits we had hypodermic needles and condoms throughout—in the display cases because I said it's important to let people know that these are two ways that HIV is spread. And it caused a little bit of an uproar and the—there were two different library exhibit committees. And the one in Watson said, Well we're kind of nervous about these hypodermic needles sitting there. The Anschutz people say, We demand that you put the hypodermic needles—(laughs) But we had an exhibit and the hypodermic needles stayed and the condoms stayed. And it was—and it drew people. I saw a guy walk by and he just—he wasn't—he just kind of saw it out of the corner of his eye and he went, Oh and he just looked at it and went through the whole exhibit. The other thing I started doing was collecting AIDS awareness posters. I did that maybe two or three years later. And I'd been doing that for quite a while. I now have at least one from every continent except Antarctica, and I've exhibited them a couple of times, but I'd like to do it some more. I have about—I think I have about two hundred framed posters.

**ALBIN:** Wow. Wow. And so over the years have you noticed a change with the Lawrence community towards people who have AIDS or HIV?

**CRANK:** I think Lawrence was always okay. They sort of—they got it. Now, there was a colleague who had AIDS and was from a small central Kansas town, smaller than Junction City. And the first person in that community that got—that went home with AIDS, people were—like if he walked into the grocery store they would leave. And there

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were rumors that he was spitting on to the produce in the produce department at the grocery store just to infect other people. There's all these rumors that were going around. When he developed AIDS and went home towards the end he said the reaction was very different, that he was not treated that way at all.

**ALBIN:** So have you noticed—because you've lived in Kansas for how many years now? Like since—

**CRANK:** Since '64. (laughs)

**ALBIN:** Yeah. So have you noticed a change with—I mean, there's definitely been a change with attitudes towards GLBT people, but how would you describe that change? Is it a slow change, is it a fast change?

**CRANK:** I have to say in Kansas it's a slow change. We're still—there's still plenty of opposition to what people think of as special rights here.

**ALBIN:** Do you think that's because Kansas is rural? Like—

**CRANK:** Well, I kind of think that and then I see the—I hear about people that are in rural areas that are—everybody's perfectly happy that they're there. My dad was from a small Missouri town and I remember us going there at some point when I was probably in junior high school. And I remember one of my cousins pointing to one house and she said, That's the Tegan sisters, well they're not really sisters. (laughs) Which didn't mean anything to me at the time and now—oh years later. That was a town of maybe five or ten thousand people at the most. And so it was just, Oh okay. (laughs)

**ALBIN:** That's funny.

**CRANK:** So—and I don't know if any of my cousins know that I'm gay, doesn't matter.

**ALBIN:** So do you think that you'll spend the rest of your life in Kansas?

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**CRANK:** My big dream is to move to Seattle my final years, but I'm not going anywhere until—as long as I have Kafka. He loves where we are and we've got a routine and he's—I'm just not doing anything while he's with me.

**ALBIN:** Right, right, right. Because—

**CRANK:** Although I shouldn't say that because I applied for a job at Oregon State one year. And if they would have offered it to me I probably would have accepted it.

**ALBIN:** Yeah, because it—there's the—like everybody—the idea is when you're in a— or it's—we're kind of trained, taught—when you're like a young, gay, lesbian person you're supposed to go to a larger location, go to those urban locations, and so—

**CRANK:** I've been very happy here so—

**ALBIN:** And what do you think about the community in Lawrence?

**CRANK:** I haven't done—I haven't been really connected with them for a while, and maybe because—as I've gotten older. And of course I don't socialize the way I used to. I was excited to hear about NetworQ with a Q. I thought it was great that that group formed, but I've never gone to anything that they've done. I guess I'm just becoming more private in what I want to do with my time and so I just can't see going to a coffee shop and socializing with people that I—I guess it's more important for me to socialize with my friends, whether they're straight or gay or—but it's the friends that I want to spend time with. And just being gay doesn't mean I have anything more than that in common with anybody else. And there was a guy that I was actually interested in at Topeka at one point and we went out on a date, and I discovered that he was a Log Cabin Republican and—(laughs) that ended really quickly. I mean, he was saying, Oh I'm tired of the liberals spending all my—my tax money, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. (unintelligible). Yeah. Oh—(laughs) so—well yeah, we're both gay but uh-uh (laughter) That's the only thing we have in common.

**ALBIN:** Well, I can't think of anything else off the top of my head.

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**CRANK:** Well, let me talk about a little bit—one of the—one friend of mine and his wife, who have been very dear friends—he's a Spanish—he's a retired Spanish professor. And we've gotten to be very dear friends because while I was one of his students he announced that he was bringing in a special guest to our class. This was Spanish 320 at the time, Intro to Latin American Literature, I think it was called. And he said that this guest would be—was named Reinaldo Arenas and I—or I was talking to Ed and said, Ed there's some poet from South—from Cuba it turned out, that they're bringing in. I mentioned the name and he said, You know, I think I know that name. And he pulled out a book of Latin Amer—translation of poetry and stories by Latin Americans and Arenas was listed in it. And so I went back to the professor and I said, Is there any chance I could—and I didn't say—I didn't say anything other than, Is there any chance I could like host a party for him for some friends that I think he might like meeting and who would like meeting him? (laughs) And Ray said, Well let me see what I can do?

And then after several days he said, Well, that's not going to work out because he's going to be pretty much busy the whole time except for—the morning that he's leaving for the airport we can stop off and he can have breakfast with you at your apartment and you can visit with him then, but it's obviously not going to be a party or anything like that. And then the next thing he said—I said, Well that would be fine. And then he said, So when did your parents find out you're gay? (laughs) I said, Well that was while I was living in Tucson and blah, blah, blah and told him that story. But he had obviously made the connection and so—and so I came out to him. And then we had this guy come to our class. Well, it turned out he had actually been a dissident and was arrested by the Cuban government on indecency charges. I—he came and he spent two hours talking to me in Spanish, a lot of which I got, some of which I didn't get. (laughs) But he did say that what the Cuban government was doing was like getting guys that were underage but looked older to proposition them and then they would arrest the people that they wanted to arrest. So he had spent, I think two or three years in their version of a concentration camp, and had gotten out in the Mariel Boatlift. It turned out that he wasn't supposed to get out, it was an accident, but he was able to get out. And he was living, I think in—his home was New York City, but at the time I think when he came here he was actually like an adjunct professor at Florida International University.



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And—but we—I had a great time talking to him, and for years afterwards when I got my degree—as I was getting my degree in Spanish which I did in '89 finally, I would tell Latin American people that I had met Reinaldo Arenas and spent like several hours him talking to me (laughs) and they would just go, Whoa, amazing, and wanted to know what kinds of things he told me. And I said, Well a lot of—now I can say a lot of them are in that movie, *Goodbye to the Sea*, that was made about his life, so it was—he was really intrigued by a gay guy in a small town like Lawrence. He was just going like, How do you live? (laughs) There's probably more things. I might come back some time and make another list of people I've met, things I've done, not people who I've had sex with but—(laughter)

**ALBIN:** No, we don't need to know that. I don't ask that of people. (laughter) That's none of my business. (laughter) Well okay, great. Well thank you very much. And we can always—yeah, we can always do a second part.

**CRANK:** I got to think about what I didn't tell you. (laughs)

**ALBIN:** And that's what people do.

**[end]**